

READING IN CHURCH

A SHORT GUIDE FOR READERS

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a reader at Christ Church. Your partnership in this ministry is greatly appreciated. We have prepared this guide to help you get better acquainted with your responsibilities. *First and quite importantly, note that your responsibilities go well beyond merely reading out loud in the service. There is preparation to be considered.* Please feel free to ask the service coordinators if you have any questions or concerns.

PREPARATION

You will want to practice the reading several times in advance, marking any places where pronunciation is difficult or transitions may cause you stumble. In preparation for reading, we ask that you also read and consider an article on the public reading of Scripture by Simon Roberts (“How to Read the Bible in Church”), which is available from the service coordinator. It will be helpful as you prepare. Here are a few additional thoughts:

- Generally speaking, Christ Church uses the NRSV (*New Revised Standard Version*) of the Bible. The texts can be found at bible.oremus.org.
- You should be provided your specific passage. If for some reason you are not, you can contact the church office or one of the clergy during the week. It will generally be the New Testament lesson in the Revised Common Lectionary.
- If you have any questions about pronunciation, please feel free to contact the service coordinators or clergy for assistance.
- You may want to consider what you wear to church on a day that you are reading, making sure it is respectful and appropriate for the occasion.
- Finally, you may also want to be mindful of where you sit, even notifying a steward should they compel you to move. It is helpful if you do not have to displace several people, but rather can get to and from the sanctuary from the nave in a quiet and inconspicuous manner.

DURING THE SERVICE

Once the service has begun, you should feel very free to focus on the worship as you would during any service. However, be mindful of when it is time to read. In short:

- After the celebrant has prayed the Collect of the Day, make your way to the lectern in the sanctuary. You will be able to place your Bible or printout on the lectern. Make as much eye contact with the congregation as possible before and after your reading.
- While we do use a microphone, you will still need to project your voice. Practice before the service, if possible. It may feel that you are speaking loudly but you need to project your voice so that those in the back are able to hear. At the same time, be careful that your tone does not come across as harsh. This will come with practice over time. Ask someone for feedback.
- **DO NOT TOUCH THE MICROPHONE.** It is a powerful enough microphone that it should be able to pick up everyone, from the shortest to the tallest among our readers.



- As the readings are written on the service sheet we do not quote the chapter and verse but read the heading as printed in the service sheet: “A reading from...”
- Following the reading you say: “This is the Word of the Lord.” The congregation responds with “Thanks be to God.”
- You may wish to make a small bow or nod of the head towards the altar as you arrive and leave the sanctuary (generally called genuflecting at the altar).

Thank you again for your willingness to serve in this way. Please let us know if you have any questions. We are grateful to be partnering in ministry with you.

